



Mayor's Affordable Housing Taskforce
December 13, 2021
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Kevin Painter, Jess Ryan, Becky Minnock, Don Erickson, Joe Schaeffer, Tara Nethercott, Dan Dorsch, Brenda Birkle, Amy Spieker

Guests: Dale Steenberg, Sam Shumway, Amber Layba,, Julie with AARP

AARP Presentation

- AARP membership organizations – 501(c)(4)
- 80,000 WY members – 13,822 members in Laramie County (about 40% of those 55+)
- Do a lot through their members
 - Information, community outreach, advocacy, volunteers
- Local advocacy – Casper public transportation example
- Housing is an issue for older folks in Cheyenne and Laramie County
 - Julie's story – Live by the Point – new senior community – husband is retiring and looking to move
 - Rent option only, not a buy option – HOA, rent, and utilities - \$4,500/mo – can't afford that amount of funding
 - Met with Renee Smith the City Grants Manager (ARPA funds)
 - Discussed options for grants
 - Met with Bruce
 - Requirements for senior and disabled housing
 - With influx of new businesses it's pressing to make sure that there is housing for existing residents
- AARP Housing Strategy (National)– want to be a resource in the work of the action team
 - Drive ADU Growth
 - Bruce suggests that only one application in Cheyenne this year
 - Unknown causes of low use
 - Advocate for Housing Stability and Equity
 - Access
 - Advocate to Reduce Local Age-Friendly Construction Policy Barriers
 - Improve Consumer Options and Choices in Housing
 - Term age friendly – Age friendly community initiative

- Livable communities umbrella
 - Age friendly community – community that creates and executes a plan that is more age-friendly – AARP promoted but benefits whole community
 - Designation from city or county
 - Three current cities – Casper, Jackson, and Laramie
 - Five year process – assess needs, year two action plan, implementing and assessing
 - Options run through University, senior center, or grassroots in WY
 - Concrete way to organize – 8 domains of livability
 - Tiered issues and focus
 - Could have a team in Cheyenne work to complete this process
- See the communities across the country – livablemap.aarp.org
- Livability index – <https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/>
 - Can be a good starting point for needs analysis
- Free weekly e-newsletter
- Opportunities for participation
 - Grassroots mobilization/support/advocacy
 - Help “get the word out”
 - Connect resources/experts
- Age friendly community
 - Who does the assessment? – Data scientist (Laramie) – Casper (aging services study done by city)
 - Cheyenne – could hire folks for the needs assessment
 - It’s unique by community
 - Senior housing needs being done at the state
- Opportunity to have advocacy in front of sixth penny and county commission
- Not all members will agree on everything – ADUs
 - Do all they can to listen and provide education
- Helena – housing trust fund
- What is happening in this community related to housing?
 - More and more rent burdened older households
 - Many people are staying and aging in place
 - Supporting people to receive home and community based services; encouraging multi-generational living
 - Silver tsunami – house is nest egg, don’t have funding for long term care
- Chamber presentation
 - 1,200 member Chamber of Commerce
 - Work with AF to advocate for projects
 - Wyoming has been all in on a failed economic development policy since the 1990s
 - Like the hope that fossil fuels will come back
 - Many communities are in a housing crisis across the country
 - Housing study a couple years back – 4,500 units short
 - About 4,000 people that drive to Colorado

- 1,200 airmen drive to Fort Collins, \$7 million in direct economic loss
- Why the shortage?
 - Supply chain crisis – exacerbated the problem
 - Housing study and employment data before the supply chain
 - Last month average housing \$375,000; average household income about \$76,000
 - Pre-pandemic – we decreased 21.4% in manufacturing
 - Gained jobs in retail trade, healthcare and social assistance
 - Poverty rate hasn't changed since 1985 (about 10-11%)
 - Biggest shortage of housing is the 75,000-100,000 income level
 - About \$180,000 in debt on average
 - We are long in Section 8 housing
 - Our people are resilient – jobs aren't paying enough to survive – which often prevents them from qualifying from government programs
 - Companies are interested in people that work
 - Big challenge is not allowing immigration – to address workforce needs
 - Example of hate crimes legislation
 - Housing is only unaffordable if you don't make enough (that is one of the ways to address –increase good job opportunities)
 - Not likely going to knock down housing rates; have to look at how to drive pay rates
 - Challenges for fixed income folks like older adults
 - Consider tiny homes
 - Nexters/Linksters (Gen Z) – moving into downtown housing
 - GBSD – work camps are expected in Nebraska
 - Transient labor to Nebraska
 - 750ish will seek housing in Cheyenne
 - Also about similar number of security forces
 - Cheyenne is still a hub
- Decrease in businesses renting space – opportunity to convert to housing
- Talk about workforce housing – more general conversation
 - More cost effective approach is to pay people a decent wage
- Who is buying the houses in Cheyenne?
 - Many people from out of state, people that are remote opportunities
 - State workers
- Should be focusing on more opportunities for rentals?
 - Opinion that we need to figure out rental options
 - Senior housing plan – Riverton – freed up housing for family housing
 - How many would be interested in moving?
 - Baby boomers downtown living – Des Moines
 - Step-up buyers – wages
- Housing for the disabled
 - Finding places that are available through the Cheyenne Housing Authority
 - 1,000 people waiting for housing in Cheyenne

- Interest rates are driving ability to qualify
 - Potential for even higher unaffordability if/when interest rates

Approve the agenda and minutes

- Tara Nethercott moves; Don seconds

Proposal from policy committee

- Explore options for city council/county commission for housing
- Make sure that we think of unintended consequences – tabled to next meeting
- Mr. Steenbergen suggested the committee explore the 7th penny for economic development projects